

No Liberty! No Life!

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A N D

DOWN WITH OPPRESSION.

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THE NEW WAY

DOWN WITH OBSTRUCTION

(in 2 parts)

No Liberty! No Life!

PROPER WAGES,

A N D

DOWN WITH OPPRESSION.

I N A

L E T T E R

T O T H E

BRAVE PEOPLE OF ENGLAND.

By JOHN ENGLISHMAN.

L O N D O N,

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No Liberty! No Life!

O MY brave, my noble countrymen, how I love, how I adore you for your resolution, to die rather than part with that glorious Liberty which we Englishmen have inherited from our fathers. What signify riches, what signifies health, or life itself without Liberty. Let your Monfieurs, and your Dons on t'other fide the water bow their necks, and submit to tyranny and oppreffion;

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poor devils they are used to it. Englishmen know better things. Thank God, we have tasted the sweets of Liberty too long ever to part with it, but with our lives. Here then, my brave fellows, let us join our hands and boldly declare, in the face of all the world, that we are resolved, one and all, never, never, to be slaves to any government whatsoever !

Such I am persuaded are the sentiments of every true Englishman, and noble sentiments they are ; but let us not, for all that, suffer ourselves to be imposed on, by a set of foolish people

people that know nothing of the matter ; nor yet by a set of dishonest men who have no true Liberty in their hearts ; who want nothing but to make confusion, and who don't care a farthing if we were all hanged. Sorry I am to say it, but true it is, there are many such men among us. I hope, however, you have more sense than to mind their pallaver.

And now, my fellow countrymen, let me talk with you a little about our hero in the King's-Bench. You believe him to be the champion of Liberty, and therefore you are uneasy

at his confinement. You think that he is suffering for your sakes, and therefore you wish to have him released. Your sentiments on this occasion are noble. Your gratitude moves you to pity the man who suffers for you, and you naturally think it hard that the man who stood forth as the defender of Liberty, should himself languish in confinement. It may seem hard, and hard it certainly would be, if Mr. Wilkes was confined by the arbitrary power of the King or his Ministers. But that is not the case. He is confined by the laws of his country, against which he had offended, and by no arbitrary

arbitrary power whatsoever. The King and his Ministers therefore have no more to do in this affair than you or I, and whoever thinks they have, must be an ignorant fool. Mr. Wilkes himself knows all this very well, and therefore submits chearfully to the power of the laws. He knows also that the laws of our country are the foundation and the security of our Liberty, and that he who attempts to break the laws is an enemy to Liberty, to his country and to himself. Since then the laws of our country are our best, our only, security against oppression and arbitrary power, let us, as we value our property

perty and our invaluable Liberty, be ourselves the guardians of those laws, that we may remain free as we were born.

As to the unhappy affair in St. George's-fields, in which some people lost their lives, I am sorry, very sorry that it happened ; and you may be well assured that there is not a man in this kingdom who is more sensibly affected by the fate of the unhappy sufferers than the King himself. But such are the dreadful effects of riotous assemblies. If the officer or soldiers shall be found to have acted illegally, you may depend on their being brought

brought to justice and punished as they deserve. Let us however remember that on such occasions the situation of the army is very hard. Is there a man among us all that could bear to be insulted and pelted without being in a passion ; and we all know that men in a passion may do things that they are afterwards sorry for. Let us also remember that all tumultuous assemblies, after the riot act is read, are illegal, and are liable to punishment by the just laws of this country. If then, in opposition to the laws, we refuse to disperse, we must take the consequence. But, I repeat it, if the military power hath
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on this occasion, exceeded its commission, the offenders will certainly suffer. What can we desire more? You may be assured, however, that this affair hath been misrepresented; let us therefore suspend our judgment, and let the law take its course.

Many foolish things have been written in the news papers about this unhappy affair, by a set of scribblers who know nothing of the matter. They make a great rout about a certain letter that was written by some great man to an officer, thanking the soldiers for their behaviour in St. George's-fields. And why do they

they make all this rout? Because they are fools. Now I will tell you how it was. You must know it is the custom of the army, when soldiers have done their duty properly, for the commanding officer to express his approbation in the written orders of the next day. You that were present in St. George's-fields very well know, that the soldiers in general behaved on that occasion with great temper and coolness; that they did not offer to fire, till they were commanded by the justices, and that the justices gave no orders for that purpose till they were in actual danger of their lives. If you believe the

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army fond of this sort of work, you are much mistaken. On the contrary, they always march upon such services with great unwillingness, and therefore it is necessary to encourage them, upon these disagreeable occasions, by such orders of thanks as those which have given so much offence to people that are ignorant of those military customs without which an army could not exist.

Some silly people, over their pots of porter, take occasion from what hath happened, to curse the army and wish that we had none at all. Little do they know what they wish for !

for ! Suppose there had been no army at this time, what would have happened ? why, we should be under the government of a drunken mob, as we were the night of Mr. Wilkes's election : a government of all others the most tyrannical. So that the army have actually been the real guardians of our Liberty.

Every sensible, sober and honest man will naturally look upon the army as their only security against the outrages of those who wish, for the sake of plunder, to see every thing in confusion. For my own part, though I would hazard my

life in defence of my Liberty, yet I would not stay an hour in this kingdom if there were no army in it. Our Liberty, as I have said before, is founded upon our laws ; but laws unexecuted are of no use : now let me ask any man in his senses, whether the laws could be executed in this kingdom, if we had no military power?

Having, I hope, satisfied every body concerning this affair of the soldiers, I now proceed to another subject : a subject which the newspaper scribblers are constantly dinning in our ears, without either rhyme or reason.

reason. I mean the supposed influence of my lord Bute in the counsel of the king. One thing we may be very sure of, whether it be so or not, these news-paper scribblers can know nothing of the matter. But I do assure you on the word of an Englishman, that lord Bute hath no more to do with state affairs than any one of us. Whatever idle stories you may have heard to the contrary, you may depend upon it, the present ministry are under no secret influence, except the influence of their own judgment and integrity. This I know to be true, or I would not assert

assert it to you, my countrymen, on any consideration. If therefore any scribbler should tell you, that lord Bute is behind the curtain, as they call it, you may be very sure that such a scribbler knows nothing of the matter, or that he intends to deceive you, to answer some purpose of his own. As to the foolish ballads and papers that are sung and cried about the streets, you have more sense than to mind them at all, for any body that has learnt to read will soon see that these nonsensical papers are written by poor wretches little better than those that sell them.

I now

I now come to the article of wages. Several bodies of people have lately taken it into their heads to insist upon having their wages raised, because, say they, provisions are so dear that they cannot live as they used to do. The truth of the matter is, that we are not content to live as we used to do, and that is one reason why provisions are so dear. The farmer, the butcher, the baker, and every other person chuses to live much better than formerly in the plain times of old, and therefore they must have a greater profit upon their goods. But will raising of wages mend the matter? No. On the contrary, no-
thing

thing contributes more to raise the price of provisions and other necessities than the raising of wages. For instance : if the farmers, the millers, the bakers, the tallow-chandlers, the soap-boilers, the shoe-makers, should be obliged to raise the wages of their servants, is it not very plain that bread, cheese bacon, candles, soap and shoes must be the dearer for it? But what concerns the people of this city as much as any of the above-mentioned trades, is the late attempt of the sailors and coal-heavers. Coals are a very considerable article in every family, and at the cheapest they are surely dear enough.

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But if the sailors who are employed in the coal trade, and the coal-heavers should advance their wages, is it not easy to foresee that coals would be dearer than they are?

Hence, my fellow countrymen, you see plainly, that it highly concerns us all to discourage every attempt of this kind. But the strongest reason against raising of wages is that those that begin it, if they gain their point, will in the end be no gainers by it; for by setting the example they encourage other trades to do the same, which in a little time will raise the price of every thing they buy, and

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consequently they will neither live better nor have more money at the end of the year.

Now, if you are the sensible, the reasonable people I take you to be, I have said enough to convince you of the folly of these riotous proceedings. Your late conduct indeed, in this respect, is the more inexcusable, because you might, if you would, be the happiest people in the world. No nation under the sun is blessed with a constitution so well calculated for the happiness and freedom of the subject. We are blessed with a King who considers himself as the father
of

of his people ; and who wishes nothing more ardently than to see us happy, contented, and free. He is Himself the guardian of our Liberty, and, I am sure, would be the first to punish any one who should attempt to enslave us. Let us not, therefore, by our ungrateful folly, disturb his peace, and perplex his counsels. A true born Englishman can never be ungrateful to a good King. Let us remember, that he is himself an Englishman, and that he considers us not only as his subjects, but his fellow-countrymen. His present Ministry is composed of persons of abilities and integrity ;

but Ministers of state, if they were angels, must always have enemies ; so that we must pay very little regard to the scribble of those scurvy newspaper politicians who find fault with things they do not understand.

That the poor of this kingdom should be discontented at the present high price of provisions is not at all to be wondered at. It is a real evil, and they have cause to be discontented ; but it is an evil not in the power of either King or Parliament entirely to remedy. We may, however, rest assured, that all that can be done, will be done ; and more
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we ought not to expect. God be praised, we have all the reason in the world to hope, that we shall be blessed with the fruits of the earth in sufficient abundance, and then the price of corn and other necessaries must fall of course, if we do not offend our Maker by our unseasonable murmurings and discontent.

Before I take my leave of you, I must intreat you always to bear in mind, that notwithstanding the dearth of provisions in this country, there are no people in the world that live half so well as we Englishmen. Those that have travelled can tell
you,

you, that in foreign parts, where provisions are cheaper by half than they are here, the working people live worse than our beggars ; and the gentlemen no better than our working people. Have we not then all the reason in the world to bless God for what we enjoy ; and, by our behaviour, to deserve the continuance of his goodness towards us ? I must likewise desire you never to forget that riotous proceedings always end in the destruction of the rioters, and very deservedly : for rioters, whatever they may pretend, howsoever they may talk of Liberty, and all that ; are always bad men,
bad

bad husbands, bad fathers, and mean nothing less than to create confusion, and bring destruction on those that are so foolish as to listen to their advice. Therefore beware of such men, as you regard your wives, your children, your lives. — As to Mr. Wilkes, I can assure you that nothing unfair is intended against him. The government will never interfere with the law, by which Mr. Wilkes himself is determined to abide.

And, now, my dear countrymen,
I bid you farewell, praying most sincerely, that you may, for the future,
behave

behave yourselves like Englishmen and rational creatures ; that you may despise, as it deserves, the advice of those who wickedly seek to create disturbance ; and, lastly, that you may remain truly sensible of the inestimable blessings of a kind Providence, a good King, and a happy constitution.

I am,

Your real friend and servant,

JOHN ENGLISHMAN.

F I N I S.

